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**CAPACITY BUILDING AND DISASTER RESPONSE:  
A CASE STUDY OF NGOS' RESPONSE TO CYCLONE EVAN IN  
SAMOA**

A research report presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the degree of Masters of International  
Development at Massey University, New Zealand

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**2015**

## **ABSTRACT**

With natural disasters increasing both in number and economic impact, the challenge for governments is to effectively respond to the needs of affected communities. In difficult conditions, and often with resource constraints, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have contributed to meeting the needs of affected communities during disaster responses. NGOs usually have flexible structures, which enable them to respond to a rapidly changing environment. They also often have strong links to the communities in which they work, which creates good synergies when responding to disasters. The involvement of NGOs in a disaster response has been discussed widely in the international community. The challenge is to ensure that NGOs have the capacity to respond effectively when the need arises.

This report has a particular focus on Samoa and uses a capacity building lens to investigate a disaster response. It looks closely at the ability of NGOs to assist the Samoan government in a disaster response. The report used a document analysis and semi-structured interviews, with representatives from NGOs involved in the response to Cyclone Evan in 2012, to investigate capacity building in NGOs with a view to enabling them to respond effectively in disaster.

The key finding of the report is that the ability of NGOs to form relationships with other stakeholders and to maintain those relationships between disaster responses is important to building partnerships that contribute to the effectiveness of a response.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This research, like many, would not have come together without the support of the following people:

Firstly I would like to acknowledge, my supervisor, Maria Borovnik. Maria has had endless patience as I have written this report and provided helpful comments on successive drafts. Thank you Maria, your encouragement and support have been invaluable.

Secondly, a big thank you to the interviewees. As development professionals your practical insights have made an important contribution to this report. I really appreciated your willingness to share your experiences and I have learned a lot from your professionalism.

Finally, to my flatmate and friend who gave up precious time to pay particular attention to proofreading along the way. This report is better for your insightful comments, of which my favourite still includes “yuk”. ☺ Also to my very tolerant friends and family, who have been supportive in so very many ways. This includes practical proof reading support and providing the all-important moral support.

Thank you

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## **SUMMARY OF TERMS (ACRONYMS)**

ADRA	Adventist Development & Relief Agency
CDCRM	Community Disaster and Climate Risk Management
DAC	Disaster Advisory Committee
DMO	Disaster Management Office
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECDF	East Coast Development Forum
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FESA	Fire and Emergency Services Authority
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IDA	Initial Damage Assessment
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MWCD	Ministry of Women, Social and Community Development
NDC	National Disaster Council
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZMFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
SAT	Samoa Tala
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SRCS	Samoa Red Cross Society
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella of Non-Government Organisations
SWA	Samoa Water Authority
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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case study of NGOs' response to Cyclone  
Evan in Samoa : a research report presented  
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Pycroft, Virginia

2015

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